

LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of Left Unity

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SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM

The Editor

LABOUR PARTY 1971

Will Griffiths MP

GOVERNMENT BANKRUPTCY

Stan Gretton on Unemployment

BACK TO SQUARE ONE?

Betty Sinclair on Northern Ireland

NOVEMBER 1971

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Notes of the Month

SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM

'Citizens of the USSR have the right to work, that is, the right to guaranteed employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.'

USSR Constitution: Article 118.

October 18, 1971

This Fifty Fourth Anniversary of the first victorious socialist revolution takes place at a significant moment. It takes place at a moment when the crisis of world capitalist economy is visible to all, with the currency conflict and developing trade wars and millions of unemployed alongside socialist advance. It takes place at a time when in Britain the Labour Party Conference has expressed the search for a new policy which shall not repeat the policies of previous Labour Governments, now universally condemned and repudiated by all the speakers equally from the platform and the body of the hall, and even by right-wing spokesmen temporarily adjusting to the strong currents of the left. For the main body of delegates, conscious of this failure of previous Labour Governments to fulfil their hopes, and conscious of the bitter outcome of the crisis of capitalism, despite six Labour Governments, in one million unemployed together with the vicious offensive of the Tory Government, this search for a new policy found expression in the demand for a policy inspired by socialist conceptions and directed towards the aim of socialism.

Lessons of the Labour Party Conference

This advance of the left at the Labour Party Conference is a very positive sign of the times. The storm of anger and denunciation from the press organs of capitalism was sufficient evidence of this. A 'dismal' conference was the verdict of the *Economist*: 'a nasty mess' proclaimed the *Daily Telegraph*; the *Times* solemnly warned against 'the danger of moving to the left for the Labour Party'; and the *Sunday Express* with its customary polite language referred to the 'arrogant, intolerant, thick-headed acolytes of the left-wing'. The recognition of the failure of previous Labour Governments, whatever

reforms they may have carried through, to change the reality of capitalist exploitation, now so powerfully demonstrated in unemployment rising to levels recalling the dark days of the thirties, is an important step towards liberation from the inheritance of the still strongly entrenched illusions of reformism. The victories won by the left on many important issues, also in some cases against the Executive was an encouraging demonstration of the change in the balance of strength in the Conference with the key role of the powerful representatives of militant trade unionism. It is true that, despite these Conference decisions, and despite last year's Conference vote for the sovereignty of Conference decisions, the domination of the right-wing still remains entrenched in the top leadership, and the immunity of the parliamentary party and its leadership from control by the Conference or elected Executive is still the proclaimed official doctrine. These are strongholds which the assault of the left has still to conquer. The effective strength of left unity, with communist and non-communist co-operation, which had won such signal positive results at the Blackpool TUC, also had its influence on the Brighton Labour Party Conference, despite the bans and restrictions impeding the democratic freedom of choice of representatives by the unions. These anti-democratic restrictions did not prevent the gains won by left unity also at Brighton, since the mandates of unions casting their massive votes at Brighton were decided at conferences in which the co-operation of Communist and non-Communist delegates had unimpeded scope.

Socialism in the Real World

Especially significant was the universal demand for socialist policies and for the strategic direction of policies to the aim of socialism. In the latter demand, however, there was one remarkable feature to which the present Anniversary calls attention. Socialism was universally presented as an idea, an aspiration, a future aim. There was no hint of realisation by any of the main spokesmen that socialism already exists in the world; that the socialist revolution won its first victory 54 years ago and goes forward from strength to strength; that socialism extends now over one-third of the world; and that the struggle for the future between the socialist world, with its allies in the camp of national liberation, and with the working-class struggle in the capitalist countries, representing the majority of mankind, and the still-powerful world of capitalism and imperialism, is the dominant character of the modern world situation, failure to recognise which is to live outside the real world.

Marx and Engels on Communism

Marx and Engels wrote in *The German Ideology*:

Communism is for us not a stable state which is to be established, an *ideal* to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things.

Similarly Lenin wrote of the historical process which is going forward at its most advanced stage in the present world situation:

Since the appearance of Marxism, each of the three great periods of world history has brought Marxism new confirmation and new triumphs. But a still greater triumph awaits Marxism, as the doctrine of the proletariat in the coming period of history (Lenin, *The Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx*, March 1, 1913, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 585).

Yuri Gagarin, the first pioneer of humanity to enter space and circle the earth in April 1961, wrote on what life and communism meant for him and for the Soviet people in a message on May Day 1961:

May Day is a festival for those with open hearts and a clear conscience, those who enjoy life and want to make it splendid for all the working people on earth.

And we Soviet people are proud to say that this is the goal we are all striving for.

It was the great Lenin who pointed out this goal to mankind. It is for the sake of this precious goal, for the sake of an everlasting spring, for the sake of human happiness all over the world, for the sake of communism, that Soviet men and women are doing great things and devoting their best and fullest energies to this cause.

This is the inextinguishable inspiration of the Soviet revolution and its achievement and pioneering role today for all mankind.

Hiding the Elephant

If the consciousness of this reality of the modern world situation, of socialism and capitalism not as abstract alternative theories and formulas and ideas about the future, but as the living key reality of the existing world situation, was not present in the discussion of delegates at Brighton, this was not through lack of goodwill or socialist aspirations. It reflected the harsh fact that the powerful apparatus of the monopoly-controlled large-scale vehicles of public expression and information in the capitalist countries ceaselessly operates to hide from general awareness this central reality of the modern world. Every form of disguise and camouflage is attempted. Thus the key contradiction of the modern world is presented as a geographical contrast between 'North' and 'South'; between the 'rich white North' (bunching together the capitalist states and the socialist Soviet Union in one bundle) and the 'under-privileged

coloured South'. A remarkable exercise in the geographical interpretation of history, according to which the wealthy racist exploiters in southern Africa evidently belong to 'the North'; while the reason for the difference in the development of Tadjikistan and Kashmir, with borders within a few miles of each other, and starting from the same background of uttermost poverty and illiteracy and primitive backwardness of the mass of the population half a century ago, but with today Tadjikistan producing more electric power than the whole of 1913 Russia; with universal literacy and educational and cultural development and high achievements of its Academy of Sciences; with industry multiplied many scores of times; with living standards comparable to a European country; while Kashmir remains in deep poverty and illiteracy; all this contrast is explained according to this theory, not because the socialist revolution has won these gains in Tadjikistan, but because Tadjikistan is a few miles north of Kashmir. Similarly with the attempt to bunch socialism and capitalism together in a single classless category of 'super-powers', or the theory of 'convergence' (how six million unemployed 'converge' with the universal employment of socialism is left unexplained). All these and a thousand similar sophistries represent the attempt to hide from popular consciousness the key reality of our time: the decisive role of the advance of the countries of socialism, with their allies in the countries of national liberation, and alongside the struggle of the working class and the supporters of peace in the capitalist countries. For it is the combination of these that represents the decisive force of advance in the modern world.

Socialism and the 'Mixed Economy'

What is socialism? There is so much mystification and misuse of the term nowadays (after all, Hitler called himself a 'socialist') that it is necessary to make plain the difference between the two social systems of capitalism and socialism. Modern capitalism, in the most advanced highly developed capitalist states, assumes a variety of forms, with an increasing role of the state in the economy, state control or state ownership of sections of the economy. But it remains a system of class ownership of the means of production, and class exploitation, whose economic pivot is the exaction of rent, interest and profits from the labour of all who are engaged in productive labour for the main benefit of the tiny minority drawing major incomes from ownership of the large-scale means of production. This class ownership continues equally through the forms of direct private ownership, or through the forms of state control or even

‘public ownership’, crippled by choking burdens of compensation and interest, which compel hard-driving of the workers in the nationalised industries to produce the necessary surplus for the real owning class. Socialism, on the other hand, is a society based on social ownership of the means of production, making possible production for use, so that incomes of all citizens are based, not on ownership, but on labour or the recognised social requirements of the sick, disabled or elderly, and the entire social product goes to social requirements, to construction or to increasing personal consumption and living standards.

Deception of the ‘Mixed Economy’

Modern capitalism, in its developed forms of monopoly capitalism and state monopoly capitalism, with persistent endeavours to integrate also the organised trade union and labour movement into its structure, seeks nowadays through its favourite spokesmen and apologists to disguise itself behind a hundred types of alias, as the ‘mixed economy’ or ‘post-capitalism’ or ‘controlled capitalism’ or the ‘planned economy’ or the ‘welfare state’ or even ‘democratic socialism’. But it remains a system of class exploitation, whether in the United States, Britain, the German Federal Republic, Japan or Australia. Thus also in the period of the Wilson Labour Government the official return of ‘rent, dividends and interest’ rose from £2,433 million in 1964 to £3,245 million in 1970, and ‘gross trading profits’ from £4,590 million to £5,028 million (*National Income and Expenditure 1971*). Socialism, based on the social ownership of the means of production, is demonstrated in the Soviet Union, already at the stage of highly developed socialism, beginning to enter towards the conditions for the advance to the future of communist society. Since every attempt is made nowadays to throw a fog of confusion over the distinction between these two social systems, to treat the distinction as merely theoretical, and to discover increasing similarities in the large-scale structure of both types of societies, the existence of ‘classes’ in both, and so forth, it is necessary to make plain the very great practical significance of the distinction in real life. This practical significance of distinction is best made clear by taking any concrete everyday problem of life with which everybody is familiar—for example, housing.

Housing under Capitalism and Socialism

Giving evidence this year to the US Congressional Committee on Urban Affairs, the Director of the Office of Standards Policy of the

Department of Commerce, A. Allan Bates, stated, according to press reports on August 23, 1971:

The Soviet Union is the first, and thus far, the only nation which has solved the problem of providing acceptable, low-cost housing for its masses of citizens. Within a few years, perhaps a decade, it will probably be generally acknowledged internationally that the best housed inhabitants of any large country of the world are those of the USSR.

This American testimony incidentally tears a hole in the theory of 'convergence'. But its special significance is that it presents a very simple, concrete, easily understood demonstration of the difference between socialism and capitalism. Why is it that such wealthy countries as the United States and Britain have been unable to solve the problem of housing for all these years, that after successive political leaders for generations have proclaimed their determination to abolish the slums (the Tory leaders at their Conference in October have repeated the old tune yet once again, alongside the most vicious housing and rents offensive), the slums remain and homelessness is reported as increasing, while the Soviet Union, starting from a far more terrible background of primitive conditions of the mass of the population half a century ago, with the added devastation of the first world war, civil war, interventionist wars and Nazi destruction, has been able within a quarter of a century to reach the position witnessed by this official American report as 'the first and thus far the only nation' having solved the immediate urgent problem of 'providing acceptable low-cost housing for its masses of citizens', with the prospect for its citizens in the near future to become 'the best housed inhabitants of any large country in the world'? Is there some special skill of building workers in the Soviet Union not to be found among building workers in Britain? Of course not, though Britain has the distinction of combining mass unemployment of building workers with a housing shortage. What then is the obstacle which prevents building workers building the houses which the people so sorely need? Every Labour and Communist Councillor knows the answer. What cripples and kills the house building programme they would wish to carry out is the high cost of land and the high interest on the capital required.

Stranglehold of Rent, Interest and Profits

Interest charges and land prices account for between 80 and 90 per cent of the cost of a council house. These exactions not only place a crippling burden on existing tenants, and a corresponding burden on those paying on mortgages, to an extent that devours

anything from a fifth to a third of their income. The high charges, being beyond the means of those with lower incomes or of young married couples seeking accommodation, who are driven to every desperate expedient of over-crowding, burdening parents or multiple occupation of decayed houses long due for destruction, at the same time limits the economic possibility of councils building the new houses required, since only a proportion of those requiring new homes can pay the high charges needing to be imposed to make the building an economic proposition. This financial limitation on new house building simultaneously throws building workers out of work and increases the scarcity of houses, which in turn raises the charges and prices still higher. Councillor Tom Vernon in his article in our September issue showed how the Government's new *Fair Deal for Housing* White Paper is designed to turn the screw even more relentlessly, with effects which he summarises as involving among other things 'the enforced raising of council rents by an *average* of 100 per cent (some will be much above the average)'. Socialism, on the other hand, on the basis of social ownership, free from the highwayman's toll of the landlord and moneylender, is not only able to provide an immediate urgent programme of extension of housing at a rate which the American official report this year, quoted above, recognises as unparalleled in any other major country, but is able to provide this housing at a rent which is never more than from 5 to 10 per cent of wages of the highest-paid earner in the family (therefore a lower percentage of the earnings of most families or households), because it is only the real costs, and not the exactments of landlords and rentier moneylenders that have to be covered. This concrete example of the difference between the economics of capitalism and of socialism could be demonstrated equally in every sphere of everyday life: in health (where the establishment of a universal free health service was the pioneering achievement of the Soviet Union); in full employment (where the abolition of unemployment was finally achieved in 1930); in education; in the position of women; in provision for mothers and children; in sport and recreation facilities and cultural provisions.

Class Struggle and Socialism

But socialism in the Soviet Union, it is objected, whatever wonderful social gains and achievements it has brought for the entire people, often fulfilling dreams and aspirations still vainly sought by progressive representatives in Western countries, is based on a political system which was established by the Marxist principle of the working

class conquest of power or dictatorship of the proletariat, and still today maintains social control and regulations incompatible with the democratic conceptions of the main body of the socialist and labour movement in Britain and Western Europe. Certainly the socialist revolution, since it was not a question of playing with a change of labels to cover the maintenance of landlordism and capitalism, but carried through real expropriation of the landlords and big capitalists, could only be accomplished by class struggle, by the struggle of the working class establishing its rule in alliance with the mass of the working peasantry, with the indispensable role of the Marxist-Leninist party or Communist Party. That this was no imposition of power from above, but a united struggle of the working masses, was proved by the fact that this united struggle of the working people was able to stand up to and finally defeat the vastly superior resources, arms and equipment of the imperialist-backed forces of the counter-revolution and interventionist armies. This indomitable strength and unity of the working people was proved again in the even severer test of the Nazi onslaught. Certainly it is true that even after the dictatorship of the proletariat had become the state of the whole people, following the completion of the building of socialism and the disappearance of classes on the basis of exploitation, strict social control is still maintained to prevent the resurgence of even petty forms of private enterprise class exploitation or its political expression or penetration from the outside capitalist world to undermine the socialist system.

Strains, Pains and Victory

Certainly it is also true that this strong power to maintain socialism can include the possibilities of various defects or bureaucratic faults in operation. In the extreme abnormal conditions of the onslaught of fascism, when a nightmare of barbarity swept the decomposing capitalist world to turn finally its full weight and fury on the Soviet Union, and also in the subsequent testing period of the cold war, the Soviet people did indeed confront and defeat these assaults; but during this period of uttermost strain compelling the most rigorous measures of vigilance and defence, while these measures prevented the penetration of the quisling fifth-columns which infested the other European countries, there took place at the same time painful violations of socialist legality and indefensible actions, which have since been publicly proclaimed and condemned before the whole world, not as extorted confessions in defeat, but in the hour of victory and highest success in order to strengthen the socialist

consciousness of the entire people to prevent such violations recurring. But this does not mean that the type of Social Democracy of the Weimar Republic, which proclaimed itself as the representative of the peaceful democratic alternative path to communism and ended in Nazism, is to be preferred.

Various Paths to Socialism

The Soviet people had to travel the most difficult path, for they were the pioneers of the first victorious socialist revolution. Theirs is the eternal honour of the pioneers. By their efforts and their sacrifices the path has to that extent been made easier for those that follow. As the leaders of every one of the successful socialist revolutions that have followed in the modern era have publicly proclaimed in the hour of their victory (whatever subsequent problems may have arisen in working out the necessary basis for unity and co-operation of the socialist countries), it was the strength and example of the Soviet Union which made possible their victory. But Marxism-Leninism, while always maintaining the basic principles, through whatever varieties of form in specific conditions, on the key questions of class relations and the role of the working class and the necessity of the working class conquest of power for the achievement of socialism, has never insisted that the particular forms of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia must be repeated in other countries, but has always throughout recognised that the path of development to the victory of socialism will vary according to specific conditions in different countries. Lenin already at the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party emphasised that the development of the socialist revolution in the capitalist democratic countries of Western Europe may take longer to mature and require a longer period of mass preparation:

The revolution will not come as quickly as we expected. History has proved this, and we must be able to take this as a fact, to reckon with the fact that the world socialist revolution began in Russia—in the land of Nicholas and Rasputin, the land in which an enormous part of the population was absolutely indifferent as to what peoples were living in the outlying regions or what was happening there. In such a country it was quite easy to start a revolution, as easy as lifting a feather.

But to start without preparation a revolution in a country in which capitalism is developed and has given democratic culture and organisation to everybody, down to the last man—to do so would be wrong, absurd (*Collected Works*, Vol. 27, pp. 98-99).

The truth of this judgement, made already in the conditions of

revolutionary upsurge of 1918, has been abundantly shown in the experience of the whole subsequent epoch to the present day.

Job Freedom

The contrast between the democratic forms won in the Western capitalist democratic countries, where these institutions have not been eroded by the increasingly reactionary trends of modern monopoly capitalism and the 'industrial-military complex', and Soviet democracy, is sometimes presented in too absolute and simplified a fashion by the advocates of the superiority of Western democratic institutions. Every democratic right which has been won by the struggle of the people is of vital importance to maintain and extend. But every socialist is aware of the limitations imposed on these forms by capitalist conditions. The Western type of freedom may indeed ensure a very wide freedom (subject to the exactions of the tax collector) for the rentier, the successful speculator or property dealer or newspaper owner. But this type of freedom may not appear so tempting to the redundant worker thrown into the discard of prolonged unemployment, in contrast with the constitutional right to work and full union protection under socialism. Even the right to choose once every few years between a government which raises unemployment to 578,000 and a government which raises it to one million may not seem such a political paradise compared with the participation of two million councillors elected by secret ballot in local soviets, with the accompanying participation of twenty millions in common association with the activities of these local soviets in every sphere; or through the trade unions, with half a million local organisations, directly administering social insurance, exercising key responsibilities in the factories and over a wide range of social and cultural activities; the Communist Party of 14 millions with their close association at every point with all sections of the people; and the vast mass discussion preceding any constitutional change or major political question requiring to be finally decided after such mass discussion by the elected representatives. Criticism of Soviet democracy is often based on sheer ignorance of its extent. Thus the supercilious critic sneers that full employment is of course easy in a 'totalitarian' society, just as full employment exists in a prison—evidently under the impression that there is conscription of labour and that the worker is assigned by a higher authority to a given job. Such a critic would be amazed, if he ever witnessed the reality, to find firms and enterprises advertising in the press and on the local radio stations for workers, and even competing with special fringe

benefits to attract workers. If a worker wishes to leave his job, the management is obliged by law to release him within 14 days after he has given notice. If, on the other hand, the management desires to dismiss a worker such dismissal requires the consent of the trade union committee elected by the workers in the given factory.

Redundancy under Capitalism and Socialism

When the speed of modern technological change wipes out old jobs the bitter experience of the skilled worker thrown on to the scrapheap of unemployment through redundancy is only too familiar at present in Britain, with the most limited chances of re-training or the opening up of new employment. When the parallel and the possibly even greater speed of technological change in the Soviet Union renders old jobs obsolete, but in an expanding economy, special provision is made to ensure that the workers thus displaced are retrained and obtain new employment without loss of earnings. A concrete answer describing this process in practice, when the question was raised by a worker in Newcastle upon Tyne in England, was given from the Ural Chemical Engineering Works in Sverdlovsk (*Soviet Union Magazine*, June 1971):

'In the last five years our workers produced 17,800 machines and apparatus of various kinds. Labour productivity went up 45.1 per cent. As old plant was replaced by more productive machines some sections were closed down, and as a result there were shifts in the labour force inside the works. The trades of cutter and riveter, and partly also boilermaker and manual welder, became redundant here. All the hundreds of workers in those trades were taught new skills and transferred to other jobs. In no case were earnings allowed to drop.

We regularly advertise vacancies in the city newspapers, on the regional radio and TV services and also on notice-boards. There is no employment agency either here in Sverdlovsk or anywhere else in the Soviet Union. The last labour exchange in this country was closed in 1930. Here the job hunts the man, and not the other way round.

Trade Unionists' Testimony

It is not surprising that trade union delegations from Britain should have observed with envious admiration the powerful role of the Soviet trade unions exercised through the committees representative of the workers in the factories, so that in 1946 an official AEU delegation could declare: 'Industry is controlled by the workers themselves through their trade union organisations . . . the trade unions operate on democratic lines.' Actually of course the factory committees of the trade unions do not displace the management, which would be a type of syndicalist confusion, since it is the working

class that rules, but the factory committees, as well as the trade union organisations at district and national levels, have their distinctive powerful role in all the spheres of labour protection and social provision, as well as facilitating consultation and joint participation with the management. In 1950 a workers' delegation of 20, three quarters of them Labour Party men or Roman Catholics, reported:

The country is run entirely by the workers. The Soviet trade unions enjoy responsibility and power unknown anywhere else. We found real trade union democracy.

This experience of mass participation at every level in the whole democratic process is essential for understanding the character of Soviet democracy, and the meaning of Lenin's declaration that Soviet democracy is a hundred times more democratic than the most advanced democratic forms in Western capitalist countries.

European Security Conference, Brandt and Home—and Hirohito

Today the bankruptcy of the cold war has become visible to all. The strength of the socialist and peace forces, together with the crisis of capitalist power relations, is bringing a new international situation which is opening out significant new possibilities for promoting the aims of international co-operation and peace. In Europe these new possibilities have found expression in the moves towards a European Security Conference and a possible mutual reduction of the confrontation of armed forces. But it is here that the reactionary policy of the British Tory Government has played the main blocking role in relation to these advances towards a peaceful development. Already on June 15 the *Daily Telegraph* was complaining that Home was 'only partially successful in resisting pressure from America and some of the smaller countries to rush towards negotiations with Russia in response to Mr Brezhnev's declaration.' Britain still sought to block the path to a European Security Conference by insisting that there must first be a settlement on Berlin. But by August 23 the Four Power Agreement on West Berlin was initialled and on September 3 signed by the ambassadors. On September 18 followed the Brandt-Brezhnev communiqué outlining an extensive long-term programme for peaceful co-operation, which led hostile critics to recall Rapallo. On September 24 Home made his last desperate attempt to throw a spanner into the works with his fantastic spy scare, which only became more ridiculous with each successive official version contradicting previous official versions after these had been met with derision. However, Home's last bolt

failed. Official spokesmen equally of France and of the German Federal Republic stated that Britain's action made no difference to their plans for a European *détente*. Following the Brezhnev-Brandt communiqué, with the shortly approaching Brezhnev Paris visit and Nixon's prospective Moscow visit in May, alongside the enforced cancellation of the previously intended Home visit to Moscow, it became clear to all that the Tory Government had brought Britain into international isolation. Tory Britain now stood revealed in the sight of all as the final bastion of reaction among the major powers—unless the courting of the war criminal Hirohito with the elaborate state visit may be regarded as the attempt to find a suitable ally.

British Labour's Responsibility in the Fight for Peace

This is the situation which throws the highest international responsibility on the British labour movement in the fight for peace. The Labour Party Conference reached important decisions for the support of the European Security Conference, at the same time as pressing for essential new objectives in home policy. But it is the connection between the two which it is essential to bring home to general understanding. Propagandists of the Common Market never tire of dwelling on the relative greater economic advance in West Germany in recent years compared with the stagnation in Britain. What they fail to point out is that the British economy has been weighed down with double the military burden falling on West Germany which has actually profited from the stationing of American and British troops. Sir Frederick Catherwood, who was Director-General of the National Economic Development Council from 1966 to 1971, revealed the true facts, in the *Observer* of March 14, 1971:

In the 1960s West Germany received from the stationing of British and American troops foreign currency which, after agreed offset purchases, amounted to at least £1,500 million. The UK, by contrast, paid out £2,500 million, less negligible offset benefits, for its troops around the world. The difference between the two countries over 10 years on this one item alone is a staggering £4,000 million. In no single year in the last decade have we been in deficit on our commercial account. Taking our visible and our private invisible trade, the average surplus since 1960 has been about £150 million a year.

It is Government expenditure that takes us into deficit. But the offsetting action required to restore a surplus is taken, not on the Government side where the problem arises, but by deflating general demands in the whole of the economy.

Yet Harold Wilson could write in the foreword to his all-too revealing confession, *The Labour Government 1964-70: A Personal Record*: 'This book is the record of a Government all but a year of whose life

was dominated by an inherited balance of payments problem.' There is thus no hint of realisation of the elementary truth stated so clearly by Sir Frederick Catherwood that the balance of payments problem was caused by the Government's own policy, carrying forward Tory policy. This is the deadly line of reactionary international policy which strangled the Labour Government and brought back direct Tory rule. The basic change of Britain's international policy is the essential condition for advancing to the new aims for Britain's future.

Communist Congress

It is in this situation that the approaching Communist Party Congress in November takes on especial significance to voice this essential unity of the home fight of the working class and the masses of the people against unemployment, rising prices, and the Tory economic, social and political offensive with the parallel fight to change Britain's international policy from the present alignment with reaction to alignment with the socialist and progressive forces of the world. The advance of left co-operation in the present period, with Communist and non-Communist trade unionists working together to promote common aims both on the workshop floor and in the unions at every level with equal democratic rights has brought an unprecedented advance in union strength and militancy to the present highest point in the history of British trade unionism. The problem of ending bans and proscriptions which hinder co-operation of working class and socialist fighters in the political labour movement has still to be overcome; but the measure of left co-operation achieved in the political field has made possible the mobilisation of broad mass campaigns on a host of vital issues. All on the left have recognised the role which the collective organisation of the Communist Party and its organ the *Morning Star* has been able to play in promoting this left co-operation; in exposing day by day the policies of Tory reaction and capitalism and imperialism; in voicing the demands of the working class and of the broad democratic progressive and peace movement; in offering opportunities for discussion; and in thrashing out strategy and tactics. This does not mean that the policy put forward on one or another particular issue will always be automatically correct, or that there will be no differences of opinion on particular issues; but the democratic organisation of the party provides for the discussion of such issues to be settled by the sovereign democratically elected Congress. The combination of these democratic principles of organisation, with close contact and a strong basis in the working class, the direction of all activities to further the aim

of socialism, and conscious adherence to the principles of scientific socialism or Marxism-Leninism and internationalism provide the most favourable conditions for the solution of all problems of strategy and tactics in the path of advance. We are on the eve of great political changes and battles in Britain. The mass anger against the Tory Government's offensive and the strength of the expression of the left currents at the Labour Party Conference are the harbingers of the forces that are gathering. The essential task is to find the most effective means to combine the broad working class and progressive democratic movement in the common struggle for the defeat of the Tory offensive and immediate aims of economic, social and political change, with the indispensable role of the Communist Party in this common struggle, since it is this combination which is the necessary condition for the advance to the victory of socialism.

R.P.D.

Want an Excuse ? . . .

If you want a good reason for getting in touch with an old friend, how about saying you were just wondering if they might have any back copies of *Labour Monthly* stored away somewhere?

And before you get talking about old times, please say on our behalf that we would be very grateful for any loose copies sent to our office to increase stocks for binding.

The ones we particularly need are: July and October 1967, all 1964, December 1962, all 1947-48, August 1945, all 1943, 1940 and 1921-38; and those most urgently wanted are **March 1932, October 1927, and March and August 1922.** The address: Unity Publications (Finchley) Ltd., 134 Ballards Lane, London, N3 2PD.

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THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 1971

Will Griffiths MP

MY first Labour Party Conference was thirty-five years ago, and in 1971 much remains the same. The seaside towns in autumn, the gossip in bars and tea-rooms, the monumental irrelevancy of press comment with its vulgar personalisation of important issues—not to mention the wildly misleading headline writers. And the Conference itself? It is, in some respects, like seeing a 'stock' play performed in repertory! The 'platform'—the NEC—with its type-cast figures. Death and retirement change the cast, but the characters remain: the heroes and the villains according to the observer's principles or prejudices! For years argument has raged about the validity of Conference decisions. In pre-1939 days, and in the first decade after the war, the parliamentary leadership was usually supported by a combination of the unions sufficient in strength to achieve unity between them both. In the post-war years we had the era of Deakin-Carron-Williamson. And so the parliamentary left was in a minority both in the Parliamentary Labour Party and in Conference. But as the unions' leadership changed, so increasingly the parliamentary leadership found the Conference decisions, of which they disapproved, irksome. So the parliamentary leadership more frequently ignored Conference decisions. This represented a more sustained rejection of democratic process than we had hitherto seen. In consequence, more and more Conference participants felt they were taking part in a meaningless charade.

During the years of Labour Government (1964-70), despite mounting misgivings, the passionate sense of loyalty, which understandably is a feature of the movement in Conference, held together the various factions. But after the general election defeat in June 1970, at the Blackpool Conference in October of that year a significant resolution was carried against the platform, and despite the plea of Harold Wilson to reject it. This virtually called upon the Parliamentary Labour Party to act in accordance with Conference decisions, excepting where matters arose in Parliament which had not been the subject of Conference scrutiny. This clearly marked the frustration of the activists, in constituencies and unions, at seeing the assault launched by the Labour Government on cherished Labour creations such as the national health service. Conference was united in rejecting the reimposition of prescription and other charges.

When Labour swept back to power, with a majority of a hundred, at the general election of 1966, some observers detected a noticeable change in the ideological content of the Parliamentary Labour Party. Into the Commons came a number of able men and women, often with an 'academic' background, vastly different to their predecessors. It is of course absurd to generalise. But many of these new Members believed that Labour's function was to manage a mixed economy more efficiently, and with a greater degree of social compassion, than the Tories. The classic socialist case (Clause IV and all that!) was regarded as old fashioned 'fundamentalism'. If this analysis is correct, then those who hold such views were sharply rebuffed at Brighton this year.

The overwhelming rejection of the arguments for British entry to the European Economic Community under the terms negotiated by the Tory Government was expected. But the support received by the pro-Marketeers was derisory. And, whatever happens in the Commons vote on October 28, the British people will increasingly see in the months ahead a powerful political force fighting entry—and utterly rejecting the doctrine of inevitable entry. The consequences of such a struggle will cause repercussions over the entire spectrum of British politics.

Almost the entire week was characterised by a militancy of remarkable dimension: on education, on industrial relations, social services, public ownership. Conference took a remarkably 'left' turn. Nowhere was this more in evidence than in the decision taken on the Friday to nationalise all banking and insurance companies. Additionally, also against the NEC's wishes, the comprehensive resolution was carried demanding that 'all insurance relating to motor vehicles should be placed under public ownership.'

However, militant resolutions passed at Annual Conference, welcome to socialists as they are, should only mark a beginning. What the Labour Party is now required to do is, in my opinion, to translate the mood and decisions of Brighton into practical persuasive policies which can be put before the British people in a manner which will convince them that a great leap forward is possible in social and economic terms. Slogans are not enough to secure in a democracy power to move towards an equal society. And in Parliament, above all, we must harrass this Tory Government day in and day out on the consequences of the decision to enter Europe, if they get a favourable decision on October 28.

That will require the united strength of the whole of the Parliamentary Party.

UNEMPLOYMENT— GOVERNMENT BANKRUPTCY

Stan Gretton*
General Secretary
The Bakers' Union

'BORN to rule—not to serve,' may well be described as the policy of the present Government. With a million unemployed, for all the world to see, Mr Robert Carr, Secretary of State at the 'Department of Unemployment' was surprised at such a high figure, which is some consolation if you happen to be one of the million whose dignity, pride, and ability to make a contribution to the society in which you live, have been taken away from you.

It has long been accepted that governments have a responsibility to create a situation of full employment, and a social responsibility to the people they serve, but the present Government uses the labour force to serve its political ends, to take the pressures off the employers, so that in Scotland, for example, for every vacancy twenty-five are in the queue. No one owes anybody a living, but a government has no right, by its policies, to deny anyone the right to earn a living—something which this Government has done.

Management is about the utilisation of resources; people elect governments to manage those resources; but in the case of the present Government they have failed, simply because financial profit is the only criterion they understand: the social consequences are never considered. To them people are expendable, to be used and manipulated, a profit out of human misery. In October the Cabinet met at Chequers, not to do any fresh thinking, not to consider the damage its policies had done, but to keep whatever its programme is 'on course'. So, after three budgets in twelve months, and no ideas to reduce unemployment, we are still waiting for the budgets to 'work through the economy'. They did work through—then someone pulled the chain, and they disappeared.

Unlike the Prime Minister, who can put to sea, the unemployed have to live with their problems every hour of every day, day in, day out, whilst the Government leaders meet to find out what they can tell their Party Conference they have done in the last 15 months. (It must have been the shortest meeting on record). One thing is certain: they never discussed the one thing they should do—call

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a general election, and let the people judge what they have done. The 'strokes' Mr Heath talked about during the election campaign have applied to only one thing: yes, he did create one million unemployed at a stroke, by his policies.

The TUC, like the Labour Party, has been telling the Government that what was needed was an expansion of the economy, to stimulate investment, but it all fell on deaf ears until it was too late. It was left to the CBI to tell industry that its pickings from price increases had gone far enough, and that it had better ease off, or else the bubble might burst.

Let no one ever again be in any doubt about the difference between a Conservative and Labour Government. We can have our differences with a Labour Government, but at least it is capable of responding to the needs of the people, something that a Conservative Government cannot do. Put them on the dole, throw them a bit of corn, and if we go in the Common Market some of them may go away, perhaps to Germany or somewhere, to find a job.

Well, we are not prepared to let them go away: we want them here, and we want jobs for them, so on November 24 the TUC is organising a demonstration to tell the Government just that, to remind them of their obligations, to demand that they act, and act now, to relieve the misery and sufferings, and to restore a basic human right—the right to work. The Industrial Relations Act forbids anyone from denying a person the right to a job. It's about time the Government itself practised what it preaches, for, by its policies, that is exactly what it has done to a million people—denied them the right to a job.

The TUC's campaign against unemployment includes a lobby of Parliament on Wednesday, November 24, 1971. The Central Hall, Westminster, has been booked from 1 pm, and speakers from the General Council of the TUC will address supporters of the lobby in the Central Hall in the evening. Further details for this lobby, may be obtained from the TUC, trade unions and trades councils.

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RHODESIAN RACISM— BRITAIN'S COLLUSION

Sarah Darling

Projects Officer
Anti-Apartheid Movement

WHILST preparations are being made in London for Sir Alec Douglas-Home to fly to Salisbury for direct negotiations on a 'settlement' with Rhodesia's illegal racist regime, the nature of Smith's Rhodesian Front party has been clearly explained by its acting Chairman. In his opening address to this year's annual Congress, Mr D. Frost declared: 'The foundation stone of our party is the survival of the European in Rhodesia.'

Since UDI, Smith's Rhodesia has moved steadily closer to South African apartheid. Rhodesian society is based on the same gross inequality of land rights, education, job opportunities and wages, backed up by a ruthless police-state machinery which forces the huge African majority into a system of disfranchised cheap labour, producing huge profits for the white supremacists.

The 1970 Land Tenure Act, for example, allocated previously unallocated land to the Europeans, who have thus claimed 47 per cent of Rhodesia's land for the 50,310 whites who live in country areas, leaving 47 per cent* of the land for the 4,930,000 (95 per cent) African majority. The Act also enforces total segregation within these areas. The Property Owners (Protection) Bill, which the Government have been urged to present to Parliament, goes one step further. Under this legislation 15 anonymous residents may apply for their area to be declared 'exclusive' by the regime-appointed President, and thus evict people who are not members of the 'predominant racial denomination'. This will enable Asians and coloureds to be removed from European land at the whim of their neighbours' racial attitudes.

Africans can attempt to eke out a living as subsistence farmers on the poor land of the over-crowded reserves, or they can work on one of the European farms for grossly inadequate wages. Alternatively they can work in the cities, where they form the cheap labour pool upon which white supremacy depends in order to attract overseas industry and investment. In 1969 the average annual

* The remaining 6 per cent is 'national' land.

income per head for Rhodesian Africans was £129, one tenth of that for whites.

Rhodesian's march toward apartheid continues. In education, the number of African pupils enrolled in primary schools dropped by 2,000 to 663,000 from 1967-71 although the African population had increased by 450,000. Only eight per cent of those who enter primary school go on to secondary education, and only two per cent complete their schooling (IV form).

The Municipal Amendment Act of 1967 empowers the municipalities to prohibit the use of parks, recreation, athletic and sports grounds by members of a race other than that for which they are provided. Yet Mr Frost found it necessary to declare that the electorate would not tolerate much longer multi-racial swimming baths, mixed public facilities and amenities and the 'ever increasing African population explosion', the 'infiltration into European areas by other races'.

The regime has had to maintain its racist rule through wide-ranging security legislation. Pass laws, similar to those in South Africa, require Africans to carry passes permitting them to be in white areas, and to produce them on demand. Through the State of Emergency, under which Rhodesia has been ruled ever since UDI, and the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act, the regime has banned the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), the major African political party, and its breakaway, the Zimbabwe African National Union, and imprisoned or restricted several political opponents secretly without trial, many for periods of over five years. African political meetings—of more than twelve people—are banned unless special permission is obtained from the police. Last month's death of Nimrod Khumalo in a Rhodesian jail after deportation from Botswana is only the most recent example of the treatment meted out to Rhodesia's political prisoners. The fact that Britain refused political asylum to Khumalo and 20 others, on the grounds that they could not prove that they were in real danger of persecution if they were sent back, is a tragic example of the British Government's collusion with Rhodesia's racists.

In 1963 the Rhodesian regime introduced a mandatory death penalty for cases involving the use of 'acts of terrorism', and in 1967 this was extended. Five Africans were murdered legally by the regime as a result, and in defiance of an international outcry and a Privy Council Ruling.

Resistance by the African people has continued despite ever increasing repressive measures. For over a year now Chief Rekayi

Tangwena has led his people in resisting attempts by the regime to remove them from their traditional land, now designated European under the Land Tenure Act. Some have been removed from the area by force, whilst others have fled to the hills, their cattle confiscated by the Government, and their property burnt.

Harsh measures taken against school children who protested against their teachers' low wages, and student demonstrations in favour of the support given by the World Council of Churches to the liberation movement, and in crushing the multi-racial Cold Comfort Farm by deporting its Treasurer and imprisoning others, have demonstrated the regime's determination to maintain racist rule.

The details that are released of Rhodesia's prison population again show the extent and growth of resistance. By December 1968, 118 people were being held in Rhodesia's death cells, most of them guerrilla fighters captured in the war declared by ZAPU in August 1967. A current trial is being held in complete secrecy 'in the interests of public order and safety' at Karoi 70 miles from the Zambian border to the west of Salisbury. Some of the heaviest fighting in the ZAPU-ANC (African National Congress—South Africa) raids in 1967 took place around Karoi, and there have been consistent reports of guerrilla activity there over the last four years.

As the Smith regime guides Rhodesian society into a system of complete apartheid, the terms of any 'settlement' negotiated, without African representation, between Smith and Home must be largely irrelevant to the 95 per cent African majority. Smith's observation that the terms now offered by Britain for a settlement are the 'best yet' demonstrates that the British Government has no intention of securing freedom for the Africans, even in the long term.

The Tory Government in Britain is under increasing pressure from its right wing and from business circles with interests in southern Africa. Home's main aim now is to grant legality to Smith's racists whilst getting away with a minimum of international approbrium. Home's willingness to travel to Salisbury, and Smith's changing terminology in recent statements, emphasising that Rhodesia would not deviate from its principle that Government must be 'retained for all time in responsible and civilised hands' rather than explicitly white ones, may well indicate the cynical depths to which Britain is prepared to sink in order to appease Home's right wing.

South Africa, eagerly pursuing its imperialist role in Africa through the so-called 'outward' policy of dialogue, and now through

military intervention into Zambia, is also keen for a settlement. *Rapport*, a Vorster Government mouthpiece commented recently:

For us a settlement would mean that our outward looking policy would make easier progress. Britain's attitude towards Rhodesia has been an obstacle to us, and it has strengthened the hands of Black Africa. . . .

Britain's decision to sell arms to apartheid South Africa was important to Smith, who is dependent on white troops from South Africa to defend the Zambesi valley against guerrilla infiltration. The fact that the British Government is prepared to flout international opinion on arms for Vorster will not have been missed by Smith, who may himself see British military support against the constantly mounting threat from the African liberation movement as a long-term aim.

The liberation movement throughout southern Africa has the moral support for their struggle from most of the nations in Africa, Asia and the third world. Further, material support from increasing sections of world opinion, including the World Council of Churches and Scandinavia, as well as the socialist countries, ensures that they have modern equipment and weapons for their fight. Solidarity movements in Western Europe have an active part to play in assisting them. In Britain, the campaign led by the Anti-Apartheid Movement must expose any settlement with Smith for the fraud it is. Whilst Britain discusses terms with Smith, the African majority know where they stand. In the course of time, their struggle for liberation will bear fruit, and Zimbabwe will be free.

LABOUR MONTHLY

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Between 1911 and 1917 Guild Socialism grew and waxed fat. Every respectable reformer, every bourgeois Labour Party candidate, hailed with delight this new doctrine, which seemed to promise revolution without revolt. They were all Guild Socialists then. . . .

Then came the Russian revolution, and since 1917 Guild Socialism has been constantly and progressively waning in power. Its only prophet today is Mr Cole, for both Mr Orage and Mr Hobson have, in their various ways, repudiated their offspring. . . .

It is no mere chance that the beginnings of the Russian revolution coincided with the decline of Guild Socialism. The fundamental weakness of Guild Socialism always was that it had the very vaguest idea of how it proposed to get to the beautiful goal that its theorists had sketched. The Russian revolution did, at least, point one way of achieving a fundamental change in the organisation of a great country. Guild Socialism was concerned with the hereafter; the Russians were concerned with the present. Guild Socialists spent their time painting pictures; the Bolsheviks used their energies in organising revolution.

(From 'A Critique of Guild Socialism', by William Mellor,
Labour Monthly, November 1921)

THE OCTOBER REVOLUT



This cover picture of the *Communist International* first appeared in March 1919 and became famous throughout the world.

THE SECOND RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

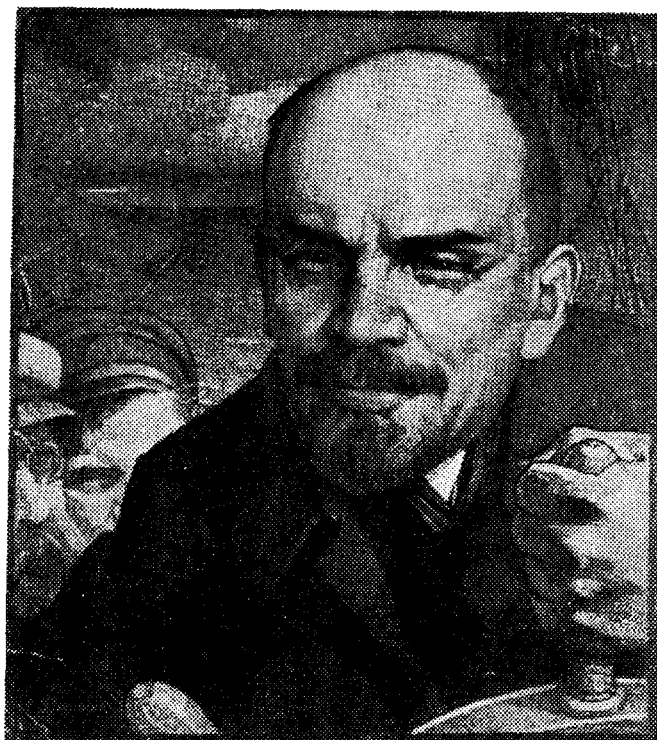
'In the midst of a war which represents the highest triumph of international capitalist imperialism, and in a country which to all appearances is further from socialism than any other in the world, socialists—genuine and not make-believe socialists—have seized the reins of power. That alone would have sufficed to strike dismay into the hearts of the ruling classes throughout the 'civilised' world. But in the present circumstances their present dismay is doubly profound, for the Leninist 'usurpers' have come to carry out the watchwords of the Russian Revolution in earnest. They have come to realise a peace without annexations and indemnities, with the right of nationalities to determine their own fate. To proclaim the land public property, and to hand it over to the tillers without any compensation to its former owners, to seize the illicit 'earnings' of the war profiteers. To establish an all-round eight hours day, and to publish all the secret diplomatic correspondence and treaties, which have hitherto been regarded by the capitalist world as sacrosanct and inviolable. . . For the first time we have the dictatorship of the proletariat established under our eyes, and that in a country whose immense extent and population, as well as potential strength, makes it a factor in international life of first-class importance.'

(*The Call*, organ of the British Socialist Party, November 29, 1917.)

N OPENS A NEW WORLD

'Armed with this gift for historical foresight and his deep instinct telling him of the thoughts and aspirations of the masses, Lenin was a master at sizing up the needs of the moment in a clear slogan. Like the seasoned helmsman deftly spinning his wheel to put his ship safely through a passage sewn with reefs, he wielded his practical slogans and tasks so as to guide the spontaneous movement of the masses, keeping a weather eye on the reactions of the masses to those measures and on the extent to which the separate phases of the movement conform to the general trends and aims. And no sooner had a slogan failed to justify his expectations or had already done its work than the helmsman quickly and capably swung his wheel round again, bringing forward a new slogan to guide the thought and will of the masses into new channels. These bold turns of the helm were sometimes so sudden that even Lenin's closest associates were puzzled, wondering whether to acclaim them or to protest. Fortunately for us, the realities dispelled all doubts.'

(Vaclav Vorovsky, an old Bolshevik, Marxist philosopher and literary critic, Ambassador of Soviet Russia in many countries, 1871-1923)



**Vladimir
Ilyich
Lenin**

Eberling

THE TORIES AND THE SOVIET UNION

Andrew Rothstein

ONE chilly morning near Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain, early in December 1918—less than a month after the armistice which ended war in western Europe—a company of British soldiers were lined up to hear an address by a War Office major. Purple-faced, glittering with red tabs and gold braid, he poured forth a stream of lies about horrors committed by the Russian Bolsheviks and the service to civilisation which Britain was rendering in sending troops to north Russia to fight them. To us, then getting 15s *a week* pocket money and as much in separation allowance to dependants, he offered nearly double as much *per day* if we could only volunteer against the reds. The soldiers listened stolidly—‘we’re all fed up with this bloody army,’ one of them had loudly assured me after I had spoken to them after tea the previous evening—and when the commanding officer invited volunteers to step forward, only one did so, to the visible disgust of the War Office propagandist.

This was the first occasion on which, as a twenty-year-old socialist, I realised what the confrontation of classes meant in practice. A group of workers on the one hand, very confused in their political opinions but determined not to be put upon, and only one solitary socialist among them to ‘put the case’: the direct spokesman, on the other hand, of the Tory miscreants who, under the guise of a ‘coalition Government’, were carrying on an intense anti-Soviet campaign in Britain and had already landed troops at Archangel, Murmansk, Baku and elsewhere to take up the war against Soviet Russia. For them it counted little that innumerable new dead would be added to the 900,000 British and 4,000,000 Russians already lying in their graves—provided that they could realise their hopes of crushing the first socialist revolution.

At no time, during over half a century since then, have the masters of big business in this country, concentrated in and around the leadership of the Tory Party, relaxed that hatred or desisted from their efforts, open or secret as circumstances dictated, to overthrow the Soviet state. That over-riding fact has determined the course of history for Europe and the whole world: it still holds good; and it is attested by a continuous stream of events.

It was the Tory War Cabinet which, in 1919, produced ‘Parliamentary Paper, Russia No. 1’, which spread the foulest lies about

terrorisation of workmen, shooting of peasants, officers 'sawn to pieces', 'nationalisation of women', 'international Jews running the country'—all to justify their continuing invasion of Russia.

It was the scoundrels leading the Tory Party in 1921 who used Scotland Yard and the War Office to produce a forged *Pravda*, aiming to back up their stories of Bolshevik war plans. It was the Tory Party leaders in 1924, attempting to continue propaganda for war on the Soviet Republic (as was in December 1966 exposed by the Tory *Sunday Times* itself), who paid Russian White forgers for producing the fake 'Zinoviev letter' for use in the general election that year against the Labour Party. And no sooner had they got into power, as a result, than the Tories refused to ratify the Anglo-Soviet treaties concluded by the Labour Government, and thus prevented an economic and financial settlement which would have opened a new era, both for Britain and for all Europe.

Instead, their stubborn and baleful hatred of the Soviet Union led the Tory leaders in 1925 to promote the Locarno Agreements with France, Germany and Italy—treaties which, in the words of one of the most blatant Tory propagandists (and Ministers) Ormsby-Gore, were intended to organise 'Christian civilisation' against the 'most sinister force' in European history—the USSR. And it was one of the most pious hypocrites of them all—Home Secretary Joynson-Hicks—who sent the police in 1927 to raid the Soviet trade offices in the City, and thus bring British-Soviet diplomatic relations to an end, on the lying pretext that a 'secret document' was concealed there.

These activities led to a series of murderous attacks on Soviet representatives throughout the world, and to an international attempt by a number of Governments to boycott trade with the Soviet Union. The campaign broke down primarily because the Soviet Government retaliated in kind, while British Labour (at a time of world economic crisis) denounced the campaign. It was ended by the short-lived second Labour Government.

But no sooner had its leaders, Ramsay MacDonald and his close associates, committed their historic betrayal in 1931 and joined forces with the Tories to form a new fake 'coalition', than the Tory leaders resumed their attacks on British-Soviet relations. They deliberately reduced ordinary trade credits to a farcical minimum in 1931, thus sending Soviet orders to any other country but Britain; they denounced the Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement in 1932; and in 1933, when the Tory Government made an attempt, unprecedented in history, to interfere in the trial of British subjects

in the USSR on charges of espionage and wrecking, it imposed an embargo on British-Soviet trade—ending trade relations altogether. A Soviet counter-embargo brought Tory arrogance to its knees, but only after great damage had been done.

Who but the Tory leaders bore direct responsibility in 1937-38 for the deals with Hitler—at first backstairs, in which Lord Halifax told the Nazi leader face to face that he could have Austria, Czechoslovakia and Danzig (November 1937), and then openly, when Chamberlain joined forces at Munich with Hitler and Mussolini to carve up Czechoslovakia (September 1938)—all with the express purpose, as many Foreign Office documents published since then have shown, of encouraging Nazi Germany to ‘go East’? Continuing this line when Hitler attacked the USSR, the Tory Minister for Aircraft Production, Moore-Brabazon, a friend of Winston Churchill, expressed the hope in 1941 (in a speech reported at the TUC that year by the President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union) that ‘the Russian and German armies will exterminate each other’ and ‘we shall have the dominating power in Europe.’

There is a mass of evidence that these continued to be the sentiments of other high Tories in the wartime Government of 1940-45 and among its officials, diplomats and generals. But events were too big for them to put their sentiments into practice until after the war. Then it was, however, that the biggest errors of Labour foreign policy were committed by Bevin and Attlee, in accepting the essential continuation of Tory foreign policy—by the artificially engineered Berlin crisis in 1948, by completing the division of Germany in order to keep its western section as a capitalist bastion facing the Soviet Union, by setting up the anti-Soviet organisation of Nato on the fake pretext that ‘Soviet hordes’ were threatening Europe (1949) and finally by beginning the rearmament of Western Germany, using almost literally the same language that Ormsby-Gore had used 25 years before.

And if today the Tory Government has once again brought the operation of trade and cultural agreements with the Soviet Union to a standstill, without even the pretence of prior discussion with the Soviet Government and in circumstances which Tory newspapers themselves have indicated are farcical, this—so far as the Tory leaders are concerned—is one more manifestation of the old policy. Hatred of the leading and most powerful socialist state as the prime motive, the most brazen lies about ‘espionage’ by tourist agencies and film exporters, juggling with pretexts that become plain buffoonery (‘KGB generals’ that dwindle down into drunken young clerks)—

all smeared over with unctuous hypocrisy (Douglas-Home and Godber vying with Joynson-Hicks and Halifax in professions of devotion to east-west relations), combined with strong-arm action that forcibly recalls the Arcos Raid of 1927—these are their methods.

Why have they done this thing? At home they have reasons enough to drag a red herring across the trail—unemployment and prices rising, living conditions of pensioners falling, the UCS workers' revolt, the unexpected (for them) turn of Labour against the Common Market. But the growing desire in Europe for peace and security, expressed in so many ways and particularly in the pressure for a European Security Conference, and the desire all over the world for a reduction in the awful burden of armaments—these things are likewise a deadly menace to the Tory leaders. They are not only enemies of the British workers and of the Soviet Union and its socialist allies: they are, like their predecessors for over half a century who have desperately fought to protect the interests of British monopoly capital, enemies of world peace. Stalin once said with great truth that Tories were constantly accusing the Russian Bolsheviks of trying to destroy the British Empire: but 'there is only one force in the world that can destroy the British Empire—the British Conservative Party.' And today it is the interests of mankind as a whole that the Tory leaders are threatening.

A STEP FORWARD ON WEST BERLIN

Charles Dukes

THE quadripartite agreement on West Berlin signed by the ambassadors of the Soviet Union, France, Britain and the United States on September 3 undoubtedly testifies significant progress towards improving East-West relations. After all, for more than two decades the West Berlin issue has been a seemingly insurmountable stumbling block between East and West, and therefore any such agreement serves a relaxation of tension in central Europe and must thus be welcomed by all peace-loving persons irrespective of their political beliefs.

Moreover there are several other reasons underlining the importance of this accord. Firstly, its conclusion clearly shows that talks—even if they continue, as in this case, over a lengthy period—can produce favourable results, and that the principles of peaceful co-existence between states with differing social systems can be im-

plemented. Secondly, in this agreement the three Western powers for the first time agree, along with the USSR, to 'promote the elimination of tension and the prevention of complications in the relevant area' and 'that disputes shall be settled solely by peaceful means.'

In addition the adopted official agreement text for the first time contains unequivocal reference by the Western powers to the German Democratic Republic as a sovereign state, to the legitimacy of the GDR's borders, to the existing links between the GDR and the German Federal Republic, and to the special status of the western sectors of Berlin which, despite innumerable official past West German Government contentions to the contrary, continue 'not to be a constituent part of the Federal Republic of Germany and not to be governed by it.'

Whilst seeming to focus attention on solely German issues, the West Berlin agreement obviously possesses strong international implications and is likely to promote other steps serving rapprochement in central Europe. Particularly important in this regard is the quickest possible staging of a European Security Conference, concrete measures serving disarmament, and a visible improvement in the central European political climate. Some people may still argue that the September 3 agreement on West Berlin is nothing really new, but such a contention overlooks the main point, namely that the most striking result of all is that such an East-West agreement came to be signed in the first place.

Detailed arrangements concerning travel between West Germany and West Berlin (which has to cross over GDR territory), communications, and the exchange of territory still have to be finalised 'by the competent German authorities'. As far as the GDR is concerned the necessary formalities could be drawn up quickly, as indeed the GDR's draft agreement concerning communications and transit traffic between West Berlin and West Germany, which was presented to the West German side a mere three days after the West Berlin agreement, shows. Similarly Günter Kohrt, State Secretary in the GDR's Foreign Affairs Ministry, has expressed his Government's readiness to sign a supplementary accord with the West Berlin Senate pertaining to visits by West Berliners to the GDR.

Undoubtedly a normalisation of the situation would also be promoted if the three Western powers and other states were now to adopt a realistic attitude towards the GDR and diplomatically recognise this German state which has existed for 22 years. The protagonists of alternatives to the truth have, after all, never fared well in international politics.

BACK TO SQUARE ONE?

Betty Sinclair

WHEN the Northern Ireland Parliament was opened by King George V on June 22, 1921, there were in attendance 40 Unionist members. The 12 Opposition Members (six Nationalists and six Sinn Feiners, including de Valera who had been elected for Down) refused to attend. They did not enter Stormont until 1925.

When the Northern Ireland Parliament opened its new session on October 5, 1971, with all doors locked and no member of the public allowed to be present, there were 39 Unionist MPs of various shades and hues, including four who had become members of the new Democratic Unionist Party led by Paisley and Boal. There was one Opposition MP from the Northern Ireland Labour Party. The 12 other Opposition Members, six from the Nationalist Party and six from the Social Democratic Labour Party, had refused to attend following their announcement in the month of July that they were withdrawing from Stormont.

Robbie Burns was a great poet, philosopher and, above all, a realist. It was he who wrote the famous phrase: 'Facts are chieftains that winna ding.' And the great problem for the supporters of Unionism is that they will not accept the true nature of the Northern Ireland state, and all that it has meant and what it stands for today. Prime Minister Brian Faulkner's speech to the farcical assembly at Stormont on October 5, when the Nationalist and SDLP Members continued their boycott of Parliament, despite all the bluster and blood-thirstiness, did try to present the facts. He pointed out that Northern Ireland (i.e. the Unionist Party) '... cannot win this struggle alone.' He went on to say:

It is now more than ever important that the UK [Tory] and Northern Ireland [Tory] Governments should form a *common view* of the situation and work together by *agreed means* to the vital end of restoring [Tory] peace and stability (My emphasis).

The *Belfast Telegraph*, in Viewpoint, October 5 (three years after October 5, 1968, in Derry, when Unionist rule was thrust into the melting pot by the original act of repression against the civil rights movement) stated:

The real power over Ulster, economically and militarily, lies in Westminster, but this is a fact which Mr Craig and those prepared to consider UDI are

unwilling and incapable of facing. These are the forces which threaten to drag Mr Faulkner down, just as they dragged down Captain O'Neill and Major Chichester-Clark . . . [whose] only crime was to recognise what they themselves failed to recognise—that *the old false concept of Northern Ireland as a sovereign state is dead* (My emphasis).

Lord Brookeborough, when he was deposed as Prime Minister in 1963, warned that he had 'not been master in his own house.' He had to get the green light from the British Treasury for every penny he spent. Capt O'Neill, when he was facing his tormentors within his own party, also made known Stormont's subservient position *vis-à-vis* Westminster. Chichester-Clark told the Stormont House of Commons a few days before he was forced out of office: 'Whoever comes to this despatch box will find the same problems, and face the same situations as I have done.' He was referring to his Government's lack of power and its true role as a very subordinate instrument of the Westminster Government and Parliament.

So Faulkner is fourth in line to use his Government's subordinate position in his own defence, and, in turn, use the pressure of his friends and opponents to extract from Heath and his unholy Conservative crew consent to use additional repressive measures, i.e. a 'third force', which would give the appearance of being 'master' to the dissidents within the Unionist camp. (The tragedy was that the Wilson Labour Government, 1966-70, did not put a stop to the Unionists' unfailing capacity for introducing reactionary legislation to 'deal with the situation'.) All that Faulkner has asked for has come apparently willingly from Heath and Maudling, and especially so in the deployment of the British Army against the anti-Unionist forces.

This continued encouragement of black reaction in Northern Ireland enabled internment to be brought in with all its tragic consequences for the Catholic and Protestant working class. The new demand, for a 'third force' of Unionist supporters, rejected recently by Defence Minister Lord Carrington, in the Protestant ghettos, *is already a practical reality* and only awaits the sanction of Heath and the British Parliament. Faulkner, even more than his predecessors, is a prisoner of the ultras, and Heath plays with lives if he also, in turn and in his desire to maintain Faulkner, allows such a force to be formalised and legalised. John McQuade, MP for Woodvale (Democratic Unionist), threatened in Parliament that 'his people were almost past keeping law and order and he did not know how long they could be held.' He had no answer to give them when they were doing 'vigilante duties' every night; they would have to continue until there was a UDR unit in their area, 'which would put an end to any

trouble.' The Ulster Defence Regiment, legislated for by the Wilson Government as a force under his Government, is now, if the ultras are given Heath's ear, to be transformed into 'localised units' which the ultras will fully support and which will take the place of the disbanded 'B' Specials.

The Orange Order's 'new Ulster Covenant' is said to have been signed by 500,000 persons at Orange Halls throughout Northern Ireland. The Order have made known their demands on Faulkner in no uncertain terms, and this action, in stirring up old and reactionary passions, bodes ill for any peaceful political settlement. Defections of a serious nature have taken place from top to bottom of the Unionist Party. MPs Paisley, Boal, Beattie and McQuade have launched a new party, the Democratic Unionist Party—a contradiction in terms—and have occupied the opposition benches at Stormont to continue the campaign to bring down Faulkner and restore the old Protestant Unionist ascendancy, at whatever cost. Mr Wm. Craig has come out with his credo of UDI and has told his supporters that 'Ulster could go it alone.' He also maintained that Westminster could probably be persuaded to accept the fall of Faulkner and the reincarnation of the progenitors of the Northern Ireland state, Carson and Craig, within new physical frames looking like Craig or Paisley. The history and practices of previous British administrations towards colonial subjects and territories would make one hesitate to deny such an assumption, or draw a similar conclusion.

If such an assumption is not wrong, then the troubles of Northern Ireland since 1920 and to date will look like a harmless variation of a Donnybrook Fair. The results would be too grim to contemplate. Already working class areas in Belfast have been forced into tight Catholic and Protestant ghettos by the removal of over 2,000 families (over 10,000 men, women and children) from 'mixed areas' by intimidation, arson and other means, whilst the police and British Army units looked on. There are few 'middle areas' left in the city, and in those that still remain they live in fear that they too will be evicted by the bullyboys in the ranks of Unionist reaction. The Unionist administration, at local and central government level, are fully aware of what has taken place and have refused to interfere. Whilst declaiming against 'terrorists' and 'no-go-areas', i.e. anti-Unionist areas, they have accepted 'bush law' when it is administered by 'loyalists'. The Heath Government still have 'their man' at Stormont, ostensibly to guide the Government here into the ways and practices of democracy. By common consensus, his role is now

interpreted as knowing and condoning all the horrors that go to make up Northern Ireland's social, economic and political life.

The '... chiefls that winna ding'. These, in Northern Ireland's case, are represented by the area's real position within the 'United Kingdom'. The great political difficulty for Faulkner, and those who went before him, is to get his supporters, and others, to accept that reality. Northern Ireland has been represented as an 'integral part' of the UK, and it was, and is, no such thing. It has been called part of the 'mainland' of Britain and even geographers could not agree with that. So part of the whole problem is to have these false terms and the reality accepted, and at the same time prevent the mass of Protestant Unionist supporters turning completely against Unionism and Westminster. And all the latter's 'plans' for Ireland. With the realisation of the awful truth there will probably come a terrible retribution and the gain will not be one for British imperialism. It could, despite the darkness that hovers immediately, be a gain for the progressive forces in the whole of Ireland.

The problem of 'security' and 'law and order' thus becomes one of retaining Northern Ireland within the framework of British political and economic control with the aid of British armed forces; also to ensure the control of British monopoly capitalist interests over 80 per cent of industrial, commercial and farming interests here. The day is fast approaching for the facing up to the real facts of life in Northern Ireland. The resentments that such a facing up will bring will tax the strength of giants. The Faulkners and Heaths will attempt to do this in their own way but, in the end, they will not count.

When the British Parliament resumes and debates the situation in Northern Ireland, it will have to come up with much better results than were evidenced during the recall debate on September 22-23. The British Labour Party will have to discard the so-called bipartisan policy on Northern Ireland. If they do not, then they will have decided deliberately to deliver the people here up to greater reaction and terror legalised by a British Parliament. This must not be allowed to put back for generations the possibility, through a correct political solution, of working class Catholic and Protestant men and women coming together in defence of their true class and national interests.

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DOCUMENTED CRIME— THE PENTAGON PAPERS

Hilda Vernon
Honorary Secretary
British Vietnam Committee

'Loss of Indo-China would be critical to the security of the US.'
National Security Council, August 1953.

THE Pentagon Papers as published in the *New York Times* make no startling revelations as to American policy or the means attempted for its achievement, always well understood by the Vietnamese. Now, however, the documentary evidence has been made public*. What is further exposed is an unbroken history of deception.

The study exposes a series of political blunders that no military prowess has been able to undo—the hope that colonialism could be reimposed on the Vietnamese people through financial and material support to the French; that despite Dien Bien Phu the war could somehow be continued; then the effort to create a viable pro-US set up in the South which would divert the Vietnamese people from their goal of national independence.

Nowhere in the study is betrayed any consideration of the sufferings inflicted upon the Vietnamese. Nothing about toxic chemicals or other horror methods save a decision of Johnson endorsing napalm on the North. This blindness to any human and moral content in the situation it created is a major cause of the US military defeats. This under-estimation of the people they were trying to suppress is perhaps the biggest blunder of all.

The National Security Council on August 3, 1954, 'ordered an urgent programme of economic and military aid to Diem—substituting American advisers for French—objectives being to maintain a friendly non-communist South Vietnam' and 'to prevent a Communist victory through all-Vietnam elections.' With these decisions says the study 'American policy toward post-Geneva Vietnam was drawn.'

The all-Vietnam elections scheduled for 1956 of course would have frustrated once for all the American aim of maintaining South Vietnam permanently in its power. For years US money and military support tried to prop up Diem's regime, yet the study reveals how

* *The Pentagon Papers*, Neil Sheehan, Hedrick Smith, E. W. Kenworthy and Fox Butterfield. Bantam Books, 678 pp, 75p.

US officials while making optimistic public statements were sending Washington secret pessimistic reports underlining his unpopularity and the developing opposition. For instance:

In the absence of more effective Government measures to protect the peasants and to win their positive co-operation, the prospect is for expansion of the areas of Vietcong control in the country-side. . . . These adverse trends are not irreversible, but if they remain unchecked, they will almost certainly in time cause the collapse of Diem's regime.

The people's reaction to Diem's bloodthirsty terror and repression was the formation of the National Liberation Front in December 1960. 'The US had gradually developed a special commitment in South Vietnam,' wrote the Pentagon analyst explaining the problems facing President Kennedy on taking office in 1961. 'It was certainly not absolutely binding—but the commitment was there. . . .' The study relates how Kennedy deepened the dilemma by sending in further US military personnel and increasing their combat role, involving them more and more in actual fighting, and how every effort was made to keep the facts from public knowledge.

The alarming military situation continued and was seen to arise from Diem's unpopularity and method of government, but he refused to introduce the changes urged by US representatives. For months US officials, in particular Ambassador Lodge, according to the study, intrigued with South Vietnamese officers to organise the coup that on November 3, 1963, overthrew the Diemist regime and resulted in the killing of Diem and his brother Nhu. The study makes clear that Kennedy knew and approved these plans, and adds: 'Our complicity in his overthrow heightened our responsibilities and our commitment.'

Four days after President Kennedy's death, Johnson indicated he would continue the Kennedy policies in South Vietnam, their purpose being 'to assist the people and Government of that country to win their contest against the externally directed and supported Communist conspiracy'! He ordered plans for clandestine operations against the North and Laos, in justification for which he asked for the development of a strong documented case 'to demonstrate to the world the degree to which the Vietcong is controlled, sustained and supplied from Hanoi.' In the study one of the Pentagon analysts remarks that the official governmental view that the war was imposed on South Vietnam by aggression from Hanoi is 'not wholly compelling'.

For months preceding the Tongking Gulf incident of August 1964

clandestine activities and provocations against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRVN) were organised. A Congressional resolution giving power to the President to commit the US to open and unlimited warfare in Vietnam was prepared early on. Lists of bombing targets in the North were prepared. None of this was revealed when the resolution was rushed through Congress within hours of the bombing raids on the North, nor that a Canadian emissary had been sent to Hanoi to threaten further drastic measures. All this is well-documented in the study, although it records the Tongking Gulf incident as though Vietnamese boats in fact had attacked the US destroyers—today widely recognised as a fabrication. The study considers that the Tongking Gulf reprisal air strikes 'marked the crossing of an important threshold in the war'.

The story of the next few years as related in the study reveals how the war both in North and South was escalated, and how information of this escalation, and its failure to win the military and political victories it was intended to achieve, was suppressed. According to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, North Vietnam was 'the root of the problem'. In September 1964 the Johnson administration reached a 'general consensus' that air attacks would have to be launched. Plans went ahead but were kept secret since 'the President was in the midst of an election campaign in which he was presenting himself as the candidate of reason and restraint' in opposition to Goldwater who was publicly advocating full-scale bombing of North Vietnam. After his election certain 'allied countries' were informed of the plans. We are told that 'Prime Minister Harold Wilson was thoroughly briefed on the forthcoming US actions' during his Washington visit December 7-9. During February 1965 North Vietnam was heavily bombed 'in reprisal' for successful attacks by the liberation forces on US bases. 'Operation Rolling Thunder'—the sustained air war against the North—was launched on March 2.

In an attempt to cope with the military failure in the South, on April 1 Johnson decided to use American ground troops in offensive action, and on this the study comments: 'The fact that this departure from a long-held policy had momentous implications was well recognised by the Administration leadership.' This decision, it was agreed, must be kept secret, and the White House, as well as the President, denied there had been any change in strategy.

The next year, 1966, was one of severe political crises and unrest in the major cities of South Vietnam, and victories in the field for the liberation forces. The air war against the North was extended to Hanoi and Haiphong, and large-scale troop and armament re-

inforcements were sent to the South. By the end of the year several amongst the Johnson Administration, including McNamara, began to have doubts about American policy in Vietnam, as success seemed as far away as ever. Discussions, suggestions and counter-suggestions continued all through 1967, and then came the shock of the Tet offensive of January-February 1968. At first Johnson played this down—on February 2 he told the press that the attack had been ‘anticipated, prepared for and met’, the enemy had suffered ‘a complete failure’, though the study asserts that the offensive took the White House and Joint Chiefs ‘by surprise, and its strength, length and intensity prolonged this shock.’ General Westmoreland reported on February 12 something of the large-scale nature of the attack, yet only four days before the Tet offensive he had reported that the liberation forces were in disarray and practically helpless.

The study comments that Johnson now faced the prospect he had avoided during the three years of steadily widening war: full-scale call-up of reserves and putting the country economically on a semi-war footing ‘at a time of great domestic dissent, dissatisfaction and disillusionment about both the purposes and the conduct of the war . . . the choice had become clear. The price for military victory had increased vastly, and there was no assurance that it would not grow again in the future.’ On March 31 Johnson broadcast his decision to limit the American operation in Vietnam, to cut back the bombing of the North to the 20th parallel and reduce troop reinforcements from what had been proposed. He hoped this would be a prelude to a negotiated settlement, and, expressing a wish to ease the partisan division racking the country, he announced he would not seek re-election.

This cannot be regarded as ‘Johnson’s finest hour’, as the study reveals that cables were sent by Rusk the night before to US ambassadors in Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Laos, the Philippines and South Korea instructing them to inform the Governments of these countries that the President’s speech would announce the bombing cut-back, adding that they were also ‘to make clear that Hanoi is most likely to denounce the project and thus free our hand after a short period.’ Contrary to this expectation the DRVN responded positively to the suggested negotiations.

There end the extracts from the Pentagon Study as published by the *New York Times*. How Nixon did not accept the hard lesson Johnson had been given is well known, and how he still seeks the victory that has eluded the US ever since its plans were laid nearly 30 years ago.

SOLDIERS THREE

Ivor Montagu

THREE recent books* present different viewpoints of the same story—the course of development and the manner of management of the mightiest military operations ever mounted or—for that matter—ever likely to be mounted.

We can be thus categorical in our superlative not because there will be no more big wars—that is much too much to be sure of yet—but because, just as aircraft have made pretty sure that never again will a sea battle take place between such grandiose fleets, or with such strategic implications, as that off Jutland in 1916, so have nuclear weapons made it impossible that ever again will land combat between so many millions of men, locked in battle swaying to and fro over so many thousands of miles for so many months, requiring constant replenishment in food, oil, weapons and ammunition by huge industrial and transportation systems, be a feasible proposition.

Only a single generation has passed, yet so pervasive has been the Western brainwashing by exaltation of sideshows such as North Africa and the American efforts in the Pacific, as well as exaggeration of the contribution of lend-lease†, that it is necessary to remind some readers that for three years and more the USSR had almost alone to withstand the full weight of Hitler's hundreds of divisions, maintained and supplied from all occupied Europe and reinforced by contingents from most of it. The Soviet Union suffered devastation on such a scale that its losses are thought to have totalled 20 million human beings—Churchill said that never before had a state suffered such damage and survived. Its victory in this titanic struggle was therefore not only a testimony to the courage of its people and to the spiritual strength and economic resilience of socialism, but to the generalship and organisation required.

It is this last aspect, the manner of management and strategy of this combat of unprecedented scale, which is fascinatingly illuminated by these books. The story of Zhukov may be simply summarised. A boy born in 1896 among the village poor, apprentice to a Moscow fur-

* *The Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov*, Jonathan Cape, 704 pp., £6; *The Soviet General Staff at War*, General S. M. Shtemenko, and *A Soldier's Duty*, Marshal K. Rokossovsky, both Progress Publishers (Central Books), 398 pp., £1.25, and 342 pp., £1.

† Zhukov (p. 684) gives the total of lend-lease supplies from US and Britain to USSR as 12 per cent of the aircraft, 10.4 per cent of the tanks, and 2 per cent of the artillery used by the Soviet forces. 'Undoubtedly that was of definite significance, but really there is no ground for talk about a decisive role,' is his estimate.

maker, recruit to the Tsar's army in the 1914 war, NCO volunteer to the Red Army, transferred from cavalry to training school in the early twenties, from command to staff and eventually Chief of the General Staff on the eve of war, he became Deputy Commander-in-Chief to Stalin after about a year and, as such, trouble-shooter successively in every crisis—first, before the war itself, against the Japanese at Khalkhin-Gol, later commanding and co-ordinating outside Moscow, at Leningrad, the counterblow at Stalingrad, withstanding the foe's last forward effort at Kursk, Orel and Kharkov, and finally rolling him back in Byelorussia, Poland, and around Berlin, where later he represented his country at the Potsdam Conference and in the later occupation Control Council—where, as correspondent of the *Daily Worker*, I had the luck to meet him. This is the tale of a man whose fate it became not only to share, as Stalin's deputy, in managing the vastest armies ever assembled, but to command, in the actual field, key forces in greater actions, more numerous, more complex, of greater duration than ever soldier had to meet before. He tells it with deep modesty and wide breadth of view. He can be critical, he does not gloss, but his criticism is largely tempered by the understanding and generosity of hindsight. After the unforgettable picture of his youth, he allows himself only two or three passing phrases on personal matters: his first love, the loss of his first wife, his happiness with his present family, but human portraits in retirement and among the ranks stud the more customary array of illustrations of stern, uniformed generals. This is a classic of Russian as well as of war literature.

Zhukov's book is extraordinary in its grasp of the whole, the clarity with which he depicts the strategy and the development of the struggle and its objectives, on either side, at every stage, never losing breadth of view in the abundant detail. It is provided with copious maps and the English publisher has added an index. The two others reviewed here are parts of a series of war memoirs now appearing in English in Moscow*. Shtemenko shows us exactly the same picture as it appeared to a less high-ranking, though yet highly responsible, officer with the GHQ staff. Rokossovsky gives what may be called the reverse side, the angle of the officer in the field. Shtemenko as the Chief of the Operations Department shows us how the daily work was organised—18 hours at work, 6 hours sleep—the gathering of information, the reportings to the Supreme Commander morning

* Other titles already available through Central Books are Marshal Meretskov's *Serving the People* and Marshal Grechko's *Battle for the Caucasus*, each £1.25. This whole series suffers for want of indexing.

and evening by telephone and personally for hours of discussion each night into the small hours, the three folders: red for urgent matters requiring instant decision, blue which might be reached on lucky days, green which accumulated until there was a lull. He too did his quota of trouble-shooting, as GHQ representative to a front command—and, at the end of the war, in the Crimea against the Kwantung armies—and he was in charge of the information and front liaison accompanying the Supreme Commander to the Teheran Conference. Rokossovsky is typical of the field man who is forever blaming GHQ because there are not enough men, not enough reserves, or not enough weapons. He is quite right of course. It is for him to press for what he needs, he can never be in a position to weigh his needs against the resources available and the needs of others. This was the job of GHQ, of Zhukov, but above all of Stalin.

Rokossovsky at first has a chip on his shoulder regarding Zhukov. He declares him his close friend (and the later parts of his book show them working together easily), but it clearly rankles that whereas in 1924 they were together in Cavalry School, Zhukov, the swot ('whenever you dropped into his room he was crawling about on a map on the floor'), got ahead of him. In the 1930s Rokossovsky commanded a cavalry division in Minsk, and Zhukov was a regimental commander under him, but by the eve of the war Zhukov as an Army General commanded a military district, Rokossovsky only a corps. So in the great retreat of 1941, with the chaos enforced by the German advance, the lesser man is complaining that 'in these grim days' his now senior is not always remembering the need for respect for a subordinate and for relying on the latter's intelligence and initiative. 'He could also be unfair in a fit of temper.' Who, one wonders, could avoid being so 'in those grim days'?

The most impressive picture one carries away from the whole three is of the art of strategy, requiring, firstly, exact information at every moment from every point—at first, in chaos days, this was almost entirely lacking, the GHQ staff itself had to go and fetch it, Zhukov was many times in danger on air trips, and once, when he thought he was behind the lines, had to use his own pistol against break-through Germans. (There is a ridiculous incident of Stalin ordering that a minor town be recaptured at any cost when it turned out that it was still in Soviet hands and he was confusing it with an unimportant village, that nevertheless had to be retaken owing to this mistake.) And, secondly, an almost intuitive understanding, only to be fortified gradually by experience, of exactly how much each commander could be relied on: how much should he be pushed into

action he was disinclined for, how much was it possible to accept his own judgment of possibility? That, indeed, was the essence of the problem of command of operations on such a scale. It is clear that if Stalin had not mastered this there could indeed have been no victory. Over such a wide field and so many personalities there were bound to be errors. Shtemenko thinks Stalin unfairly acquired a low opinion of Petrov, a Commander in the Crimea. At another time, however, Stalin significantly clamped down on Mekhlis (whom Shtemenko detests) for trying to alibi a defeat on a general he was supposed to be helping. Stalin certainly later acquired a well-placed confidence in Rokossovsky, who became one of his favourites. Rokossovsky is forever urging on his own superiors, when they order that this be held on to or that be taken, that 'wishful thinking is not enough' but, when Zhukov for his own part challenges Stalin with this admonition in front of everyone else, Rokossovsky is terribly shocked at such rude brow-beating of the Supreme Commander.

The portrait of Stalin that emerges from the accounts by men at least two of whom worked so closely with him is not the least valuable in their testimony. It is entirely convincing and gives the effective lie to many of the later caricatures. He ruled with a rod. Shtemenko says Stalin often made the staff see films late at night and they did not dare to refuse, and tells a vivid story of checking his papers after one of the nightly conferences and finding maps missing that bore the whole plans for the future offensives. After frantic searches in every possible place, he went back next night to Stalin and challenged him with having kept them. Stalin without a word went into the next room and fetched them, saying: 'It's a good thing you told the truth.'

Stalin would listen to others. And when he had decided wrongly and saw that this was so, he would soon recognise this and change his decision, respecting those who had contradicted him. Zhukov tells how angry Stalin was when the former gave it as his opinion that Kiev must be surrendered. The latter's anger made Zhukov demand to be released from the post of General Staff Chief and allowed to go to the front. Stalin growled: 'We can get by without you.' A few hours afterward he allowed Zhukov to resign, asked him to tea, put him in command of an offensive he, Zhukov, had been advocating, and a few weeks later appointed him Deputy Supreme Commander.

Zhukov does not hesitate to speak of his admiration for both Blucher and Tukhachevsky and roundly describes the military arrests of 1937 as 'unnatural, alien to our system, contrary to the situation in the country, unfounded' and naturally damaging to the

army. At the same time he pays tribute to Stalin for his overall command and, above all, for the organisation of the country to provide the necessary supplies and logistical support. Indeed he claims that it was he (Zhukov) who insisted, persuading an at first reluctant Stalin, that the latter should formally assume the post of Supreme Commander-in-Chief; only thus could be achieved the proper co-ordination between military and civilian claims and resources, Zhukov believed.

No review could do justice to all the ores to be mined from these rich writings. There is a terrible drama in Zhukov's account of the Nazi forces poised to attack on June 22: Stalin, though warned by Churchill, unwilling to believe it, and holding the defenders back from the frontier. At this moment, a courageous German sergeant-major coming over to the Russians with the details on the very eve of the attack, and, within a few hours, a second heroic deserter, swimming the river between the armies to bring the news. And yet Stalin breathing heavily on the wire but still silent in his reluctance to give the necessary order. Zhukov believes: 'All his thoughts and deeds were dictated by the desire to avoid war and the confidence that he would succeed in that.'

And for fantastic minutiae—who could guess, as Shtemenko tells us, that, at a worst moment, told to go to sleep, he awoke to hear Zhukov playing popular melodies to himself on a concertina; or, as Rokossovsky tells us, that, at a crisis in the defence of Stalingrad, the Soviet air support was grounded because a plague of field mice had infected half the pilots with tularemia and gnawed the rubber insulation on the plane controls wherever they could get at it?

BOOKS

Liam Mellows and the Irish Revolution

C. Desmond Greaves

Lawrence & Wishart, 416 pp., £4

THIS BOOK supplies the necessary background information to the present happenings in the North, as well as bringing out clearly the position in the South where an Irish Republic is supposed to exist but which is, in reality, a state which exists in a political twilight zone, being neither free nor

unfree, sophisticated in a bourgeois democratic sense, existing, side by side, with another state which in reality is a British colony. The overall reality is that Ireland combines two states, one colonial and the other neo-colonial, and the island as a whole is going through the throes of a struggle for national liberation.

The subject of the book was born in Lancashire in 1892, the son of a sergeant of the British Army; thirty years later he died with three others before a firing squad in Dublin's Mountjoy Prison. They were condemned without trial: their executioners were those who stood for the

Anglo-Irish Treaty in the course of the civil war which that Treaty generated.

Mellows became one of the first organisers of the Irish republican youth movement, Na Fianna Eireann, at the age of 21. Later he became a leading figure in the senior movement which led to the Irish 'Rising of 1916, in which he did not participate centrally in Dublin, instead launching a supporting action in Galway. Prominent figure in the war against the Black and Tans, he opposed the Treaty. He was executed as a reprisal for the shooting of a pro-Treaty Member of Parliament even though he was in jail at the time.

Thirty-nine years ago—a decade after the end of the Irish civil war—I was a member of Na Fianna Eireann. All we learned of Mellows was that he was a guiding light of our youth movement, and that he and his companions were executed on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and we learned a poem, which a friendly Catholic priest composed on the day of the execution, with words like 'Mary, Star of the Morning, guide them home.' It was not until later that we learned of the socialist and anti-imperialist content of his thoughts.

The first and finest expression of his thoughts was given when the Irish Parliament was discussing whether or not to accept the terms of the 1921 Treaty. A majority were for, because they saw that it gave them, if not the nation, the 'freedom' to develop the opportunities it presented for an Irish bourgeoisie. With the opposition were those who regarded it as a betrayal of a historic national struggle. Some spoke against with emotion, but Mellows mounted a penetrating argument against it, concentrating on the neo-colonial character of the new state in a partitioned Ireland: 'It is not a state, it is part of a state; it is not free, because

England controls every vital point; it is not Irish, because the people of Ireland established a Republic.' (The name of the new state was the 'Irish Free State'.)

He was quick to point out the character of British imperialism and its considerable experience in manoeuvring subject peoples into certain positions: 'Lloyd George may well laugh up his sleeve. What must his thoughts have been, when he presented the document for signature. "If they divide on this we can let them fight it out, and we will be able to hold the country; if they accept, our interests are so well safeguarded that we can still afford to let them have it"' (p.278). It was Mellows who saw the effect of the bargain between the Conservative section of the Irish national bourgeoisie and Britain on the general anti-imperialist struggle, when he said: 'We are going into the British empire now to participate in the empire's shame, and the crucifixion of India and the degradation of Egypt. Is that what the Irish people fought for freedom for?'

This is not only a remarkably researched biography, packed as it is with valuable economic and historical background information, it adds up to a case book on imperialist strategy. It deals with such vital questions that still exist in the general national liberation struggle such as the weapon of 'divide and conquer', neo-colonialism, the leading role of the working class, and the vacillations of the middle class in struggles for national freedom. There is much valuable information also on the need for unity between the British and Irish peoples in a struggle against a common enemy. There is mention of the Anglo-Indian Communist, Shapurji Saklatvala, who proved himself more 'Irish' than those in Dublin, and who supported the Treaty, by voting against it in the House

of Commons; of Willie Gallacher rushing to Dublin with information that the Irish negotiators were preparing to capitulate, and being disbelieved; and of a brilliant analysis of the Irish developments in the editorial notes of *Labour Monthly* of January 1922.

What emerges from the book is that the small Communist Party of that period, despite all its imperfections, played a great part in inspiring Mellows with the correct political orientation and the ideas for his social programme. The building, in the conditions of today, of a really strong and influential Communist Party in Ireland is the best guarantee for the full completion of the Irish revolution.

MICHAEL O'RIORDAN

Organize!

Wyndham Mortimer

Beacon Press, 260 pp., £4.65

FOR THE STUDENT of that period which saw the establishment of industrial unionism—the Congress of Industrial Organisations unions—this book adds a new and important dimension. It is a companion to two others: *Labour Radical* by Len DeCaux, and *Dangerous Scot* by this reviewer. Completed by his daughter and friends after his death five years ago at age 82, this is the fascinating autobiography of one of the most modest but also one of the most effective organisers and mass leaders I have ever known.

The coal miner son of British parents, he tells of his years in the mines starting at 12 years when there was no union. The heart of the book describes his life as a worker in the motor car industry before unions were organised, and how he and others undertook this challenging job which later established the United Auto Workers' Union. This was done in the face of violent opposition from Fords and General Motors, but also from the American Federation of Labor

leadership. There is described how unions were organised without a staff of paid organisers. Especially rewarding for every trade unionist today is the story of the organising of the union in Flint, the heart of the GM empire, and the famous 44-day sit-down strike that tied up GM for the first time. The man who led that organising drive and strike was Mortimer, and, when GM was forced to sit and negotiate its first-ever contract, they faced Mortimer and John L. Lewis across the table. And it was Mortimer, then Vice President of the UAW, who signed that historic document in 1937 for the union.

Because of his forthright stand as a Communist, 'Mort' was passed over for the No 1 post at the 1939 union conference, as a result of the pressure of CIO leaders Murray and Hillman. In the book Mortimer expresses disagreement with the Communist Party leadership on its support of R. J. Thomas for the UAW presidency—an issue that must be left to American historians to settle. In my book I characterised Thomas as 'a weak and generally incompetent' person and expressed the view that 'the left-progressive majority made a mistake in capitulating to the pressure of Murray and Hillman.' During the cold war period, Mortimer was disgracefully squeezed out of any trade union position by Murray and Thomas. Mortimer, however, reflects an underestimation of the overall strategy of the left-centre alliance in the CIO, which was the key to its successes.

A serious mistake by the editors is the complete omission of Mortimer's political affiliation. As a close colleague of mine in Ohio, he was an outstanding 'worker-intellectual' who always recognised the decisive importance of the Party and actively participated in its work. In the book his defence of Communists, advocacy

of socialism and grasp of Marxism are expressed, but the incredible omission of his Party membership by the editors reflects how deeply the poison and fear of red-baiting still affects otherwise good left-wingers.

Written in the same clear, and oft-times humorous, terms that made him outstanding as a labour organiser on the factory floor and as a union leader, I recommend this book most highly.

JOHN WILLIAMSON

Labourers and Landowners in Southern Spain

Juan Martínez-Alier

Allen & Unwin, 352 pp., £5.95

ACCORDING to the publishers' blurb, this book is essential reading for students of agricultural affairs, land reform and labour relations. Doubtless such readers will find a good deal of interesting detail about the semi-feudal relations still existing in Spain. As a laywoman, I confess that I found it heavy going—a painstaking social and economic study which, like so many of its kind, labours mountainously to bring forth a number of fieldmice with not so much as a new squeak between them. Having examined a relatively small area of Andalusia, and held what he calls 'structured interviews' (sociological jargon for asking loaded questions) with workers and employers, 'designed to show the value-systems of both', the author reaches the following remarkable conclusions: that Andalusian landowners are 'generally motivated by profit-oriented considerations in the employment of labour'; that labourers 'aim to stabilise or increase their wages'; and, further, that 'the slogan "the land to those who work it" seems to the labourers a desirable policy.' Somehow, I don't really think readers of *Labour Monthly* need to spend £5.95 to discover that.

NAN GREEN

The Life of Robert Owen by Himself

Introduction by John Butt

Charles Knight, 250 pp., £3

ANY ACCOUNT OF OWEN, even his own, should be checked against Engels's words in *Anti-Dühring*: 'All social movements, all real advance made in England in the interests of the working class were associated with Owen's name.' This volume, which he wrote at various times, goes only until the mid-1820s and thus omits entirely his association with the trade unions, and with the birth of the co-operative movement. It does cover in detail his successful founding of the model factory at New Lanark, including various experiments in what we might call 'business management', and, associated with it, his theories of education, which he put into practice in the school for the children of the factory workers: he allowed not only no punishments, but no harsh words to the pupils. In both fields, he had spectacular success, and excited keen interest among administrators and statesmen throughout Europe. At this stage he was aware that the workers were robbed under capitalism, but did not proceed to a clear understanding of the class struggle. It is in understanding this situation that his own account of himself is of such interest. Later, of course, the administrative support ceased, and he became deeply involved with the working class. Mr Butt contributes an introduction which examines his financial activities and suggests that he was at least a 'keen' business man and sometimes unscrupulous. He could hardly have succeeded if he had not been. Owen's writing is at the same time clever and a little naive; it conveys the large sweep of his ideas and the practical situation in which he was applying them very vividly. He certainly deserves to be studied in his own writing.

JACK DUNMAN

If They come in The Morning . . .

Angela Davis and others

Orbach & Chambers, 266 pp., 45p

SUBTITLED 'Voices of Resistance', this is a moving collection of writings, correspondence, statements, case histories, manifestos and records of black political prisoners in what one confined group calls the 'fascist concentration camps of modern America'. Knitting together innumerable cases of police and judiciary persecution, it is perhaps the most shattering indictment yet to appear of the repression by the American state of black militants.

Put together by Angela Davis (who has become the leading symbol of the black political prisoner in the United States) in co-operation with Bettina Aptheker, one of the leaders of the committee to gain her release and that of all similar prisoners, it contains among its 27 selections a fine essay by Angela Davis herself on the institutionalised suppression of black Americans and their reactions to it, a paper by Miss Aptheker on the social functions of prisons in the US, a number of letters and statements by George Jackson and the other Soledad Brothers, by Bobby Seale, Ericka Huggins and others, and a remarkable manifesto of demands by organised prisoners in California's notorious Folsom Prison.

This is far more than testimony of unjust confinement and of triumphs of the revolutionary spirit under dehumanising conditions; it is also a record of a unique, unprecedented development of prison rebellion. The real nature of the American prison system, with its greatly disproportionate number of black prisoners, is clearly revealed in the rapid politicalisation that has been occurring among the American prison population, the revolutionary organisation of black,

brown and white inmates, and their struggles against racist and brutal penal administrations. With this book, the uprising and massacre in New York State's Attica Prison in September 1971 and the murder of George Jackson in California's San Quentin can be fully understood as episodes in the liberation struggle in the United States.

An interesting and important theoretical question is raised here, having to do with the organisation of the lumpenproletariat. As Angela Davis points out in her perceptive essay: 'Some Marxists in recent years have tended to banish criminals and the lumpenproletariat as a whole from the arena of revolutionary struggle.' However, she quotes Karl Marx's remark that lumpenproletarians are capable of 'the most heroic deeds and the most exalted sacrifices, as of the basest banditry and the dirtiest corruption', and she then stresses the need to take account of the effect of mass oppression of black and coloured peoples in the United States: 'In the context of class exploitation and national oppression it should be clear that numerous individuals are compelled to resort to criminal acts, not as a result of conscious choice—implying other alternatives—but because society has objectively reduced their possibilities of subsistence and survival to this level.' Both in and out of prisons, the Black Panthers and others have begun to organise the lumpenproletariat and have revealed the revolutionary potential of many from this stratum as it is created under American conditions.

Both for supporters of freedom for Angela Davis and her fellow political prisoners, and for students of social conflict in the United States, this is an indispensable book.

WILLIAM J. POMEROY

PROFESSORS OR PLUMBERS

OUR October postbag contained some thoughtful comments on *LM*'s articles, as well as appreciation of the journal as a whole—reflected, in this letter from a Wimbledon reader, by her order for a few extra copies for friends she had helped to introduce as readers: 'The arrival of *Labour Monthly* this morning has meant that as usual nothing gets done until I have read it from cover to cover. Usually after two or three readings I send it abroad, but (not for the first time) I do not want to be parted from it. Besides, so many of my friends like to read it that the only thing to do with this month's exceptionally informative issue is to send a copy to each to pass round their particular circle.'

A Corby reader found the July article by James Aldridge 'thought-provoking', and was prompted to write to us recently with a suggested title which his own occupation had brought to mind: 'On a number of occasions, reference has been made to the question of Professors or Plumbers. Being the latter, I would be pleased to see further articles by James Aldridge or other writer contributors on this theme. It is important that disentanglement is swift.'

My own humble contribution in the July issue was an attempt to express our thanks to readers who have helped us with their successful efforts to locate and send us early *LM*s for binding. I should like to explain that, although the Johnson series of reprints covers the years 1921-29, our stocks of 1930s copies are now so low that we cannot complete volumes for 1932, and we shall soon be unable to complete others. This means that, until the thirties volumes become available in reprint, a complete set is unobtainable. This is the reason for our renewed appeals for early copies, particularly now for March 1932. Can anyone help?

Nicola Seyd

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Left, Left, Left, Peggy Duff. Allison & Busby, 278 pp., £2.80

The New Radicalism, Gil Green. International Publishers (Central Books), 200 pp., £1.20

Capitalism and Modern Social Theory, Anthony Giddens. Cambridge University Press, 262 pp., £3.60

Workers' Self-Management in Algeria, Ian Clegg. Allen Lane, 250 pp., £3.25

Prison Notebooks, Antonio Gramsci. Lawrence & Wishart, 284 pp., £6

A Critique of Linguistic Philosophy, C. W. K. Mundle. Oxford University Press, 292 pp., £2.50

Law and Politics and Law in the Colonies (Law, Class and Society, Book 3), D. N. Pritt. Lawrence & Wishart, 152 pp., £2

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